

Division of Youth Corrections

Key Notes

Five Key Strategies In Action

Issue 3

Spring 2011

Questions for the Director

By John Gomez, NYC Director



The Division of Youth Corrections Director, John Gomez, recently responded to a number of questions regarding the Division. Some of John's thoughts are reflected below.

Q. What are some of the 'best practices' of the Colorado Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) which could be used for replication in other jurisdictions?

A. Assessment Services: I believe that Colorado's DYC has developed and sustained a very sophisticated, comprehensive and effective assessment process for all newly committed youth. Within the first 23 days of a youth's commitment, the Division conducts a number of assessments and diagnostics that cover a youth's social/family history, medical, educational, substance abuse, and mental health needs, as well as a thorough risk assessment using the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment instrument. At various times, the Division uses more than 24 different diagnostic instruments according to the individual issues and needs presented by the youth. The Division is also using a screening instrument to identify youth who have one or more risk factors for traumatic brain injury, and referring those youth for a Neuropsychological consultation and evaluation. By the time a placement decision is made, both the youth's Client Manager and the residential program in which a youth is placed have a comprehensive package of information that is invaluable in developing an individualized treatment plan. All Division placements, both state-operated and private, are able to effectively target resources toward the highest risks and needs that youth present.

Evidence-based Inventory: The Division has recently developed an evidence-based inventory that is designed to gauge the extent to which the various residential and non-residential programs, both state operated and private, have embraced

the principles of evidence-based programming within the services they provide. Working in conjunction with representatives from the provider community as well as an outside consultant, the Division designed an evaluation protocol to assess current practices to determine alignment of evidence based principles, and to recommend changes at the program and system level to enhance their ability to produce positive outcomes. The protocol emphasizes *process* rather than promoting rigid adoption of discrete, evidence-based *programs*. This is not a checklist to apply to the programs, but rather relies on interviews with program staff, file reviews, and direct observations of the milieu. The Division is using the same team to complete the various site visits, and thus far has received very positive feedback from the provider community. This process will inform the Division as to what is needed to continue to move the entire system toward embracing the principles of evidence-based services.

Five Key Strategies: Nearly four years ago, the Division set out to reinforce the philosophical values that have guided the Division's decisions over the course of the last 5-10 years. However, in reviewing what were then referred to as "Master Goals", the Division's Leadership Team realized that those goals were wordy, "bureaucratic-sounding" philosophical statements that were not very meaningful to Division staff – from line staff to Division leadership. Thus, the Leadership Team distilled those concepts into what is now known as the Division's Five Key Strategies. Very simply, these strategies are:

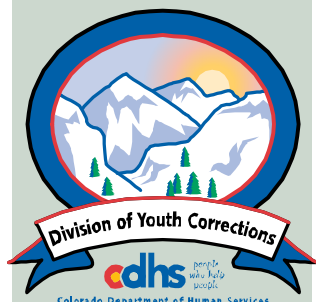
The Division will provide
THE RIGHT SERVICES AT THE RIGHT TIME
delivered by
QUALITY STAFF
using
PROVEN PRACTICES
in
SAFE ENVIRONMENTS
embracing
RESTORATIVE COMMUNITY JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

Inside this issue:

Celebrations	2
Victims' Rights Week	3
DYC Initiatives	4
Meet the Group	5
Employee Spotlight	6
Community Support	7
Did You Know?	8

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director
Colorado Department of
Human Services

John Gomez
Director
Division of Youth Corrections



(Continued on page 9)

Let's Hear it for the Boys

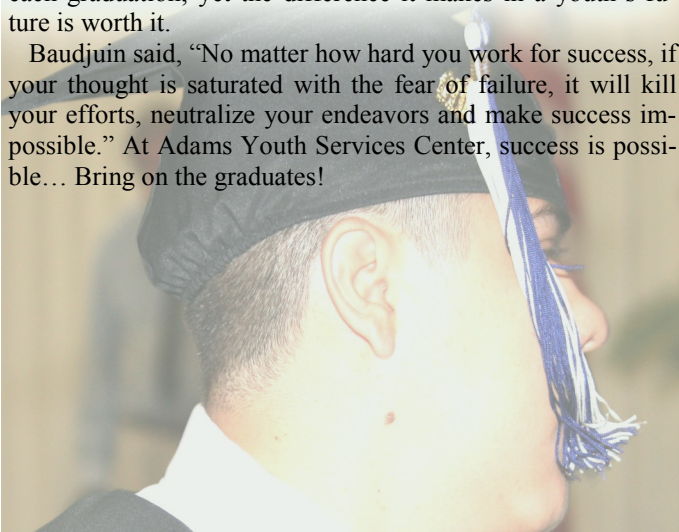
By: Cindy Price, District 27J School Teacher, Adams YSC

Graduation is always something to celebrate at Adams Youth Services Center (AYSC). Guests arrive, the podium is set, banners are hung, and special cakes ordered. It's a black robe event; once a month another student receives a GED from AYSC. Students must complete an interview, accept the challenge of being an academic leader and role model in the classroom, and commit to do the extra work it takes to graduate. Entering the GED Track is an honor and a privilege; GED graduates understand other students consider them an inspiration.

After completing pre-tests, tutoring as needed, and seven hours of formal testing, it is time to celebrate a huge accomplishment. Students work with teachers to plan the graduation ceremony. Each student invites family or special guests including teachers, case workers, and even the judge. Dignitaries at the event often include Brighton 27J school officials and school board members, eager to show their support. Each graduate writes his or her graduation speech and chooses a key note speaker and two additional supporters to speak. Thus, teachers and staff at AYSC have definitely had to brush up on their public speaking skills. The auditorium is adorned with special seating, walls, podium, and graduation banners. The graduate is decked out in an official black graduation cap and gown, and selects a favorite color keepsake tassel. Classical music plays as guests arrive and are given special programs. The graduate walks in to "Pomp and Circumstance" and the ceremony ensues with speeches, cheers, tears, and an abundance of applause and accolades for the graduate. Each graduation takes about 40 minutes and is completed with celebration music such as "Let's hear it for the boy!" Then, the best part—cake—selected by the graduate and shared with everyone. After a myriad of pictures, the graduate is able to enjoy special time with his or her family.

Despite a great deal of work, every graduation inspires a handful of students to join the ranks of the GED Track at AYSC. It takes a unified effort by teachers and staff to pull off each graduation; yet the difference it makes in a youth's future is worth it.

Baudouin said, "No matter how hard you work for success, if your thought is saturated with the fear of failure, it will kill your efforts, neutralize your endeavors and make success impossible." At Adams Youth Services Center, success is possible... Bring on the graduates!



Art For Kids, Emanuel Mural Project

By: Mike Caires, Activities and Recreation Coordinator,
Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center

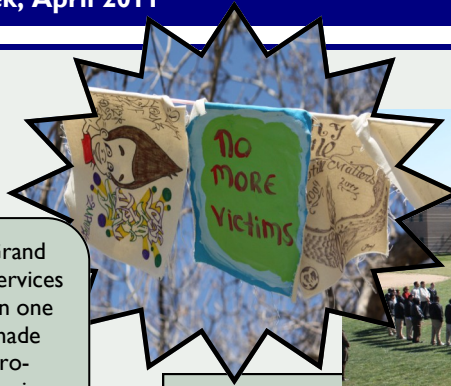
Artist Emanuel Martinez knows Lookout Mountain well. Years ago, practicing his art using matchsticks and paper towels during his stay at Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC), Emanuel learned first-hand the potential inherent in creating art. Now a master artist, Emanuel teaches youth the powerful beauty of creating art with a paintbrush and a vision. In the process, he helps instill the idea that, no matter where you've come from or what you've tried, you can achieve great things. Emanuel demonstrates through his life and art that the potential of youth is limitless.

The artist is collaborating with the organization Art for Kids, and LMYSC, to create "Visualize your Potential," comprised of six murals, each up to twenty-two feet high, depicting the theme *Potential*. The murals explode with color and symbolism, and contain larger than life meaning for all who see them.

The Art for Kids organization provides art supplies, guidance, and teachers to underprivileged youth in programs across the United States. The opportunity for LMYSC youth to work with Emanuel, a master artist, and the non-profit, Art for Kids, is the chance of a lifetime. The project in its entirety illustrates within the Division of Youth Corrections the full circle of the true potential of youth. The grand unveiling May 9th will be a poignant reminder to the Lookout Mountain Community and all of NYC for years to come of the strength and power of art, and the true potential in youth.



A youth at Grand Mesa Youth Services Center works on one of the 12 blankets made for the Latimer Safe House Program; a program providing services to victims of domestic violence.



Youth at Look-out Mountain Youth Services Center created flags that hung as a reminder during National Crime Victims' Rights week. After hanging the flags, the community circled together in the field to discuss victimization.



Youth at Platte Valley Youth Services Center released balloons with messages of strength and courage.



Youth and staff from Zebulon Pike Youth Services Center (ZPYSC) participated in a 5K race for victim's rights. A youth from ZPYSC finished third in the race.



Platte Valley Youth Services Center engaged youth in a clothes-line project by creating tie-dye t-shirts with messages about victimization.



The Female Residential Program at Turning Point has participated for the past several years in the annual Ft. Collins "Take Back the Night" event., sponsored by CSU's Campus Feminist Alliance. April 21st was the 20th annual event to give support to survivors of sexual assault, and empower women to speak out against sexually violent crimes. Take Back the Night gives a safe space by allowing women to share their stories and experiences. All Turning Point female residents were invited to participate in the event; some made signs, spoke at the rally, and marched for the cause.
~ by Melissa Jeffries



Multi-Disciplinary Team Decision Making, Planning and Implementation Update

By Al Estrada, DYC Associate Director



The Division is on-track to implement the first phase of the DYC formal Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) decision-making process on July 1st. Phase one will include utilizing the MDT structure for all newly committed youth at the initial assessment staffing, and at the staffing held to develop transition plans prior to parole or movement to a step-down program. Phase two will follow in September when the Division will hold quarterly MDT decision-making meetings for all youth.

The MDT Steering Committee recently completed a round of facility and regional office visits designed to engage administrators and staff in face to face discussions. The purpose of these visits was to afford the Committee an opportunity to gain first hand information from the staff most impacted by the change, including anticipated challenges and potential solutions, and to update each group on the status of planning. These visits, have allowed the Committee to understand new challenges and help prepare for an effective implementation.

Planning for implementation has progressed on several fronts. Groups are working on:

- The overall, ongoing training plan
- Roles and responsibilities training (May-June, for Clinical staff, Education staff, Facility Administrators, Regional Directors, Client Managers, Client Manager Supervisors, Program Managers, Contract Residential and Non-Residential staff and the Division's Leadership Team)
- Facilitation training (June-July, for Client Managers, Client Manager Supervisors and Program Managers)
- Family education materials
- Client Manager supervisor coaching skills enhancement
- Policy revision
- Outcome planning and TRAILS modifications.

This is a sampling of the concerted effort to prepare the organization for what, to many, may appear similar to current planning and decision making for committed youth; in fact, the MDT process that will commence on July 1st will be recognizable to many. As I have repeatedly stated, formalizing of the MDT process is not an indictment on our current practices. Rather, this initiative was born out of a review of current practice, a recognition that we can improve, and a goal to achieve better outcomes with adjustment in the decision making process.

Many people have dedicated significant time, energy, and creativity into designing a process that allows for case specific stakeholders to contribute information from a variety of perspectives. This process will result in two distinct outcomes:

1. A decision making process that elevates the role of families includes community stakeholders such as victim advocates and natural family supports and contributes to overall better outcomes – youth progress successfully through commit-

ment and parole and are prepared to remain free of the criminal justice system; and,

2. Utilization of a change management process characterized by several themes:

- Frequent communication at various levels of the organization
- Clear rationale for the purpose and intended outcomes
- Inclusive of the people impacted by this change and expected to carry it out at its most fundamental levels
- Appropriate level of training
- Development of feedback mechanisms to allow for course correction early in the implementation process.

I personally want to thank John Ferullo, Jennine Hall and Chris Anderson of the Office of Staff Development for their creativity, tenacity and willingness to take risks. There are several Central Office Managers who have dedicated large amounts of their time to this project including Tammy Schneiderman, Ashley Tunstall, Joe Anderson and Idelle Kness. Regional Office staff have rolled up their sleeves and worked very hard, they include John Rogers, Dan Fremont, Joe Thome, Frank Diaz, Lucia Waterman, Krista Husak, Darlene Deichert, Sharon Hammond, Cris Matoush, Melissa Lovato, Kelly Critenden, Karen Chinatti, and Sarah Holladay. DYC Clinical staff have been integral as well, including Jesse Roberts, Don Self, and Maddie Tormoen. Kristen Withrow and Jason Lillich as our facility representatives have been engaged from the very beginning and have provided an invaluable perspective on many issues. The Division's Victim Services/RCJ Coordinator, Spiro Koinis has provided valuable input into the importance and role of a "victim's voice" in the MDT process. Cheryl Lassota has provided the Committee with a perspective on issues from the role of school principal. Ed Wensuc has joined the group to assist in developing tools for gathering and analyzing feedback. Cindy Owen from Quality Assurance has also provided invaluable assistance with the development and revision of policy. The private provider community has also played a role in planning. They have been represented by Bill Wood from Rite of Passage, Amber Lacey from Third Way, David Bennett from Savio, Candace Batterson from Hilltop, and Jeff Holliday from Jefferson Hills. I have appreciated DYC staff's willingness to take on something new, design it from the bottom up, and work hard to see it through to implementation. This process affirms for me how the Division exemplifies the Key Strategy "Quality Staff" in so many different ways. Stay tuned for additional updates in the weeks to come.

Meet the CJRA Sub-Committee

By Joe Anderson, Assessment Director, DYC Central Office



As part of the effort to support fidelity of the Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) practices across the DYC continuum, the CJRA Oversight Sub-Committee was successfully chartered to implement a 2010 CJRA Master Training Model. The primary goal of the revitalized training initiative was to elevate the quality and consistency of CJRA application throughout the Division. The training design plan includes four modules strategically selected to address all facets of CJRA use in DYC. In order to meet the challenge of generating specialized lesson plans, a collaborative partnership ensued between DYC Office of Staff Development staff and customized workgroups of CJRA trainers and champions, including representatives from all four regions and central office staff members. These individuals worked together to create consistent, valid, and dependable instruction plans for the four training components.

Principal training components consist of a new user Certification Training, a Re-Certification training course designed for seasoned users, instruction in Service Planning and Decision-Making for Mental Health Specialists, and a macro CJRA

overview tailored to inform DYC Administrators. Lesson plans for each of the modules are founded in stakeholder feedback related to existing training needs, and systemic issues identified in various areas of the DYC organization.

For the first time since introducing the CJRA to the Division, all newly hired Client Managers and Assessment Specialists are now required to become certified in the administration of the CJRA instrument. The CJRA Certification Training course is designed to focus on CJRA administration, interpretation, service planning, and decision-making. CJRA Certification, as defined by DYC, requires successful completion of a sixteen-hour instructional course, a written CJRA exam, and co-supervised administration of three CJRA instruments within a sixty-day time period.

The CJRA Re-Certification Training is designed for seasoned Client Managers, Assessment Specialists, Client Manager Supervisors, and Assessment Specialist Supervisors, and centers on engendering an in-depth understanding, interpretation, and use of CJRA initial and reassessment results within the context of a complex DYC system. The CJRA Service Planning and Decision-Making Training course is designed for Mental

Health Specialists with the intent of increasing knowledge in the application of CJRA findings to create treatment plans and devise therapeutic intervention. Finally, the CJRA Administration Overview Training provides Facility Directors, Clinical Directors, and the DYC Leadership Team a summation of the current status and future direction of the CJRA, as it relates to complementary initiatives and its application throughout the DYC continuum of care.

In addition to overseeing the quality and change management needs of the CJRA training initiative, the CJRA Oversight Sub-Committee is committed to gather stakeholder input to continue to gain better understanding of CJRA use and improvement areas, and to respond to stakeholder input, questions, and concerns. This information will be invaluable when applied to assist with development of future CJRA advancements and initiative goals. CJRA Oversight Sub-Committee members believe ongoing communication and response to CJRA users within the Division is vital to the continued success of the CJRA initiative.

Grand Mesa Youth Services Center, Restorative Community Justice Committee

By Ruben Sandoval, Youth Service Counselor, Grand Mesa Youth Services Center



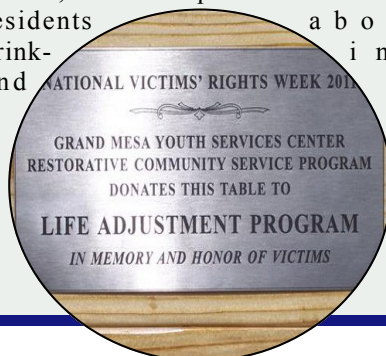
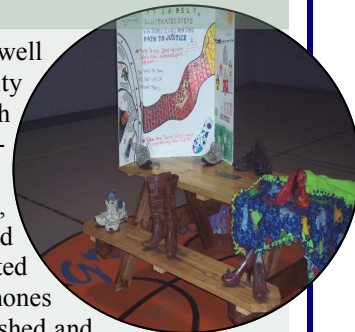
Grand Mesa Youth Services Center (GMYSC) honored the theme of "Reshaping the Future/Honoring the Past" during the recent National Victims' Rights Week.

Youth, families and staff engaged in a broad variety of projects including poster making, an 'empty shoe' display, creating "no sew" blankets, and construction of a picnic table. Proceeds from a Root Beer Float Fundraiser supported purchase of materials. The child-friendly fleece blankets were given to Latimer

Safe House program, which provides services to victims of domestic violence.

Another project of significant impact was completion of a picnic table built and finished by a class of trade students and donated to the Life Adjustment Program (LAP). Residents from LAP, a local residential program for head injury victims, came to speak with GMYSC residents about drinking and driving, as well as the reality of living with a head injury.

Finally, families and staff donated used cell phones to be refurbished and given to domestic violence victims to call for emergency services. Through education of youth about their impact on victims and involving them in activities to give back to victims, National Victims' Rights Week was a great success at Grand Mesa.



Celebrating October-December 2010 Anniversaries

25 Years of Service

Fusilier, Theresa

20 Years of Service

Gallegos, Randy

Gease, Elissa

Theodore-Taylor, Suzanne

15 Years of Service

Bravo, Jennie

Montez, Carla

Worrell, Tonjala

10 Years of Service

Doi, Rose

Fitzsimmons, Betty

Gurule, Christine

Huerta, Daniel

Jackson, Eustasus

Loneragan, James

Malloy, Girard

Navarro-Conger, Leslie

Ramos, Robert

Toledo, Eustaquio

Wedel, Ramona

5 Years of Service

Behringer, Amy

Buchanan, Mary

Garry, Thomas

Lujan, Alicia

Mason, Olando

Nichols, Harold

Robinson, Celena

Ruiz, Lenny

Taylor, Jill

Vigil, Jonathan

West, Brian

Young, Randy

*Thank you for
your years of
service to youth,
families, and our
community.*

Congratulations to The Division of Youth Corrections Employees of the Quarter



Arriella Drapeau
Adams Youth Services Center



Eustasus Jackson
Spring Creek Youth Services Center



Teresa Lister
Marvin Foote Youth Services Center



Patti Maurer
Grand Mesa Youth Services Center

Employees at Sol Vista Youth Services Center Hold First Open House

By: Mike Milligan and Victoria Gallegos, Sol Vista Youth Services Center

On January 12, 2011, Sol Vista staff held its first Open House to provide information to families, treatment providers, and the community about Sol Vista services. Staff members from all departments, as well as four high level residents, manned tables displaying art and serving refreshments to guests. Displays with details of Sol Vista's programming engaged visitors. Victoria Gallegos, Sol Vista Clinical Director led the impetus for the open house. She acknowledged that attendance was beyond expectation, and remarked on the substantial organization and creativity the display portrayed of the secure treatment program.

Visitors included numerous community members, vendors, Juvenile District Attorneys and Public Defenders, Two-Core staff, Pueblo County Sheriffs, Local Attorney Generals, Southern Region Resource members, resident's parents and guardians, as well as multiple DYC Client Managers and Administrators. The Sol Vista Administrative team is pleased with attendance of approximately sixty visitors, and hope to make this an annual event.



Savio Provider Network

By David Bennett, Director of Program Development, Savio House



The Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) Provider Network's new web-based, interactive referral system is improving service delivery for committed youths transitioning into home communities. As part of the Division's Continuum of Care initiative, community-based service contractors provide support, supervision, and therapeutic services required for successful community reentry. Through a new system launched in all four DYC Regions over the past year, services can now be requested, reviewed, authorized, and communicated within minutes rather than the days or weeks previously required.

DYC Transition Coordinators perpetually develop culturally and geographically specific new options for community services for paroling youth. Providers range from statewide service organizations, mental health centers, and residential treatment programs to individual therapists, local businesses, and grass roots organizations. Each potential service provider is vetted through background and credentialing checks and approved through state business procedures before they are able to serve DYC clients. Managing and tracking these diverse services with good program and fiscal accountability can be a daunting task.

DYC issued a request for proposals in 2007 for a services management and information system to support a system to include an online service directory as well as a services tracking process. Savio was able to offer a Provider Network system featuring a custom-developed services tracking database with the potential

for web-based, interactive use. Under the awarded contract, Savio was able to launch a searchable service directory website listing available services by type and counties served. The popularity of this website encouraged the DYC Regions to develop a fully interactive site to manage the service requests. Led by DYC's Northeast Region, which already managed its own automated services tracking system, each of the four Regions worked closely with the Savio project team to incorporate all procedures needed to request, review, approve, and track service authorizations. Each Region contributed ideas and dedicated staff time to test and implement the system within a record three months of statewide implementation in FY 2009-10.

The resulting DYC Provider Network website now includes a searchable statewide directory of over 150 providers and 1,000 services actively available for immediate use by DYC Client Managers. To initiate a service, the Client Manager enters the secure website, finds the client's case listing, and enters a service selection and the proposed dates of service. The system sends an email to the appropriate supervisor, who can then enter the website with authority for service approval. Using system tools for case review and approval, the supervisor can approve, deny, or modify the request. After approval, the system notifies both Client Manager and provider of authorization. The provider may then access a separate secured website with real-time listings of current authorizations and case information. An additional feature generates billing forms, helping to simplify and improve fiscal management.

With Provider Network service use information now immediately accessible to all users, FY 2009-10 saw improved service use and tracking, important improvements to help sustain DYC's Continuum of Care.

The Beacon Center Closes Their Doors

By Lucia Waterman, Assistant Director, Central Region Office



Beacon Youth and Family Center provided services to the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) youth for decades. After 42 years Beacon Center sadly closed its doors on April 30, 2011. Beacon Center built a legacy on providing comprehensive mental health treatment for children and families. Executive Director Michael Guthrie stated: "It has been an honor for Beacon Center to have served so many Colorado children and families over the years. We believe in our mission, and sincerely hope that the demise of our programs doesn't mean kids don't have access to treatment." Unfortunately, many factors contributed to the difficult decision for Beacon Center to close. A dramatic decrease in referrals for mid-level (non-locked, non-restraint) care played a significant role in the decision. Smaller budgets for referral sources dictate that this level of care was not being utilized at capacity, thus leading to a decline in revenue. DYC is grateful for the services Beacon Center provided, and honor the legacy of the institution.

Lookout Mountain Partners with the South Platte Valley Humane Society

By Gary Mills and Mike Caires, Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center

Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center has partnered with the South Platte Valley Humane Society for over two years, building a bridge with community and man's best friend. Community members from Lookout spend a day each month working alongside the shelter's staff, tending to and caring for the many dogs and cats who seek a new home and new beginning.

Although hard work, it can be very rewarding; scrubbing floors and kennels, exercising, and grooming are just part of the day as the youth learn to care for the animals. One youth drew a powerful analogy, "Helping the dogs to have a clean kennel, brushed coat and a happy

smile we've increased the chance of him finding a home today!"

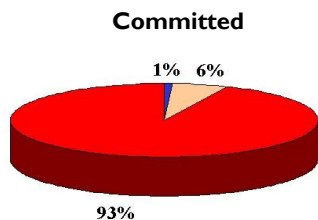


The same can be said for the youth in our care at DYC. A holistic approach to therapy and services helps youth prepare for a better tomorrow by presenting well today. The community service provided to the South Platte Valley Animal Shelter can be a powerful experience in which youth realize a positive impact from

their efforts. The staff at the shelter rave about the partnership with Lookout Mountain; this long lasting partnership is beneficial to humans and animals alike.

Research Unit Highlight

By Kelli Burmeister, Senior Researcher, DYC Research Unit

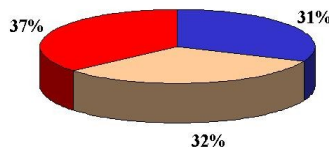


■ Low Risk ■ Moderate Risk ■ High Risk

When youth are committed to DYC, the vast majority are at high risk to recidivate (93%), few are in the moderate risk level (6%), and 1% are low risk.

When youth are detained, the statistics look different, as these youth have not penetrated as far into the system when compared to committed youth. Thirty-seven percent (37%) are at high risk to recidivate, 32% are in the moderate risk level, and 31% are low risk.

Detained



■ Low Risk ■ Moderate Risk ■ High Risk

DYC In the Spotlight

The Denver Post [published an article](#) and 9NEWS recently [ran a story](#) about the Art For Kids Emanuel Project at LMYSC.

The Corrections Today Magazine [published an article](#) written by DYC Associate Director, Al Estrada.

Singer Songwriter Stephanie Pauline created a music video in partnership with the Youth For Christ Organization, who provide spiritual services in DYC facilities. A video for her upcoming national release single "Toy Soldier" was filmed at SCYSC last December, and is scheduled for national release on the Gospel Music Channel.

Did You Know?

The DYC Website will translate into any of 17 different languages with the click of a button. [On any web page](#), look at the bottom right hand corner and click "select language"

The DYC website has an interactive Google map and bus route links to each of the 11 state facilities. [Click here](#) to see an example.

You can access the DYC training calendar online by clicking the "employee resources" button on the [DYC Home Page](#). Supervisors or training coordinators can register directly from the website. [Click here](#) to view the training section of the DYC website.

**COLORADO
DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES,
DIVISION OF YOUTH
CORRECTIONS**

4255 S. Knox Court
Denver, Co 80236

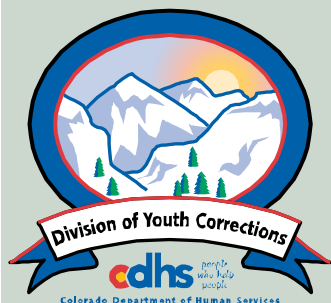
To Submit Articles for this
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Please contact:
Heidi Bauer, DYC
Communications
Coordinator at:

Heidi.Bauer@state.co.us
or 303-866-7335

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John Rogers-Southern Region
Jeanne Stewart-AYSC
Lucia Waterman-Central Region



These five simple, yet powerful statements represent the philosophical foundation of the Division, and help guide every decision that the leadership makes. If a decision or a new initiative doesn't honor at least one of the Five Key Strategies, then the Division will likely not pursue the new initiative. What is replicable in other jurisdictions is the notion of simplifying the core values of an organization so that they have meaning to all staff and stakeholders, while constantly reinforcing these values by expressing them in all that the organization does. For example, Colorado's Five Key Strategies have been drilled down to the core essence of each individual employee's job responsibilities by expressing the Five Keys in every employee's annual performance plan. This ensures that employees understand how their day-to-day responsibilities and activities help support the Five Key Strategies; e.g., helping a direct care staff understand how he or she helps to ensure safe environments, or how the various cognitive behavioral approaches we use within state facilities support the concept of using proven practices.

Q. What do you think is one of the most pressing national issues facing juvenile justice?

A. Across the country, many state youth corrections agencies are experiencing decreases in population levels – particularly in the commitment systems. The downward trends in population levels, coupled with the very difficult economic climate the past two years, have resulted in the need for systems to manage significant reductions in capacities and workforce. Youth Corrections leaders are faced with massive change management challenges that have not existed for decades. Central to these challenges is the fundamental notion that employees have a tendency to resist and/or fear change. Thus, youth corrections leaders must be vigilant and purposeful, using strategic practices in how they manage change, and not forget the “people” aspect of change management principles. While overall population numbers are decreasing in many jurisdictions, the proportion of youth with increasingly complex treatment needs (e.g., mental health needs; substance abuse needs; traumatic brain injuries; etc.) seems to be growing more rapidly. I believe it is incumbent upon youth corrections agencies to do everything

possible to fully assess the needs of these youth, and implement programs and services that address individual youth needs. Within this population are youth with traumatic brain injuries (TBI). We've participated in a pilot program in Colorado to screen and assess youth for risk factors associated with TBI, and we've estimated that approximately 30% of all newly committed youth present at least one of the five risk factors associated with TBI. These youth present special treatment challenges because they may not respond as well as other youth to many cognitive behavioral treatment approaches that most state systems currently employ. Thus, one of our challenges is to identify treatment modalities that are effective with this population.

Q. What is your top priority for the Division in the coming year?

A. Since the mid-1980's, the Colorado DYC has operated its commitment system with an overarching Client Management model. When a youth is first committed, he or she is assigned to a client manager with one of the Division's four regional offices, and that client manager manages the youth's case throughout the duration of the youth's commitment. When a youth transitions to parole status, the same client manager acts as the youth's parole officer during the period of mandatory parole. This has enabled the Division to provide a great deal of consistency for youth, for families, and for community providers. However, this model has also led to a nearly singular voice of authority over the numerous case decisions that impact upon a youth throughout the course of their commitment. Thus, the Division has been working on the design of a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Decision-making Model that will fundamentally change the dynamics of how cases are managed, and in particular, how case decisions are made. Based on numerous studies, it's well understood that better decisions are made when multiple stakeholders are involved, and the model that Colorado is moving to, honors that premise. Most importantly, the Division has long sought a way to engage families of the youth we serve in a more meaningful way, and the MDT Decision-making model will ensure that families are much more engaged than ever before.